

Film Annotation - "Who Killed the Electric Car"

Sustainability Problems

1. Title, director and release year?
 - "Who Killed the Electric Car" was directed by Chris Paine and released in 2006.
2. What is the central argument or narrative of the film?
 - The film's central theme is the conception and then fall of the electric car and how renewables factor into a sustainable future.
3. How is the argument or narrative made or sustained? How much scientific information is provided, for example? Does the film have emotional appeal?
 - Presents facts about history of electric car. States why would large powerful oil industries do anything to support a vehicle that would lessen the demand for their product.
4. What sustainability problem does the film draw out? Political? Legal? Economical? Technical? Media and Informational? Organizational? Educational? Behavioral? Cultural? Ecological?
 - The film draws out economical, organizational and ecological sustainability problems. Showing how the economic factors in the organizations producing oil pushed them to suppress the electric car.
5. What parts of the film did you find most persuasive and compelling? Why?
 - I found it incredible that GM only leased their electric cars and after the lease expired they just took them all back and crushed them when there was nothing wrong with them.
6. What parts of the film were you not compelled or convinced by? Why?
 - Electric cars are not the answer to all energy problems. The materials used to produce them are expensive to mine and if not disposed of properly can cause ecological damage. Though electric cars use no fossil fuels they use electricity, which is primarily produced by coal and natural gas. While natural gas is cleaner than gasoline coal is far worse.
7. What audiences does this film best address? Why?
 - I think this film is a good film for anyone. It shows how the corruption within companies can actually suppress things that may help to solve sustainability problems.
8. What could have been added to this film to enhance its environmental educational value?
 - This film could have used more of an in-depth look into the life cycle analysis of an electric car from cradle to grave. Although this was likely intentionally left out because of too much analysis would appeal to the general public.
9. What kinds of action and points of intervention are suggested by this film? If the film itself does not suggest corrective action, describe actions that you can imagine being effective.
 - Buying electric and hybrid vehicles to reduce the emission of greenhouse gasses and bring the United States to be more energy independent.
10. What additional information has the film compelled you to seek out? (Provide at least two supporting references.)
 - Based on a life cycle analysis of battery electric vehicle vs. conventional gasoline vehicles a study found that even though the initial cost of electric vehicles takes longer to payback in the long run it saves the consumer money. It did not give conclusive evidence

as to whether the emissions over the lifetime are reduced or increased but cited that with improvements in methods of energy production the electric car can become less of a polluter.

Bibliography:

Lifecycle Analysis Comparison of a Battery Electric Vehicle and a Conventional Gasoline Vehicle. (n.d.).
UCLA. Retrieved May 4, 2014, from
<http://www.environment.ucla.edu/media/files/BatteryElectricVehicleLCA2012-rh-ptd.pdf>